

The following email message was sent to OI&T employees on September 29, cascaded through the OI&T management chain.

To My Fellow VA Employees:

During the past several weeks we have been talking with many of you in the field regarding the permanent reassignment of IT Operations & Maintenance (O&M) personnel. This reassignment is on schedule to take place on October 1, 2006. We have heard that you want to receive more information about the impact of this change on your day-to-day work activities.

As a result of your input, we are making an effort to ensure that you are informed of the steps that are being taken to implement the change. Secretary Nicholson and Mr. Howard, VA CIO (confirmed as of September 29, 2006), filmed a broadcast to share their vision for the realignment. You can view this broadcast at: http://www.va.gov/FEDMOD/IT_Realignment.aspx. In addition, we will continue to post information on the OI&T website (<http://www.va.gov/fedmod/>), and provide regular updates by email. Your supervisors and local and regional leaders will be conducting meetings and conference calls about the realignment over the coming weeks.

As with any change of this scale, we know that issues will arise, and we know that you will continue to have many questions. Please try to resolve issues through your OIT supervisors and local HR office. To address critical HR issues that cannot be resolved through the OIT management chain, local HR offices, or other resources; we have established an IT Realignment Ombudsman. You may contact the Ombudsman at the following toll free number: 866-225-4951. The Ombudsman is available Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Central Time.

I am counting on you to continue to provide the same high level of service to the facilities you serve. The IT systems you so expertly maintain and operate are recognized around the world for their contributions to the VA mission, and I am confident that this level of service will grow even further with the new capabilities that will be available to us as we move through this realignment. Your work is critical to VA's mission, and I thank you for your service and dedication.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon H. Mansfield

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs